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General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

49th plenary meeting
Monday, 8 November 1999, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Gurirab . . . . . (Namibia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hosseinian (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Floods in Viet Nam

The Acting President: May I, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Viet Nam for the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage that have resulted from the recent floods.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

Mr. Pham Binh Minh (Viet Nam): On behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, I wish to express our appreciation for your words of sympathy, Sir. The damage caused by the flood in central provinces of Viet Nam is very serious and extensive. According to initial reports, human losses numbered over 600 lives. More than 600,000 houses have been flooded and damaged and about 42,000 hectares of rice paddies and other crops flooded and destroyed. Hundreds of ships have been sunk and destroyed. The total economic loss is estimated at about 718 billion Vietnamese dong, equivalent to over $51 million.

The Government of Viet Nam has taken all the necessary measures to overcome the consequences of the disaster. In this connection, we welcome any international assistance to help alleviate the suffering of the people in the affected areas and restore their lives to normalcy.

Agenda item 17

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(h) **Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit**

Note by the Secretary-General (A/54/108)

The Acting President: As indicated in document A/54/108, the General Assembly is required, during the fifty-fourth session, to appoint four members to fill the vacancies on the Joint Inspection Unit that will arise from the expiration of the terms of office on 31 December 2000 of Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski (Poland), Mr. John Fox (United States of America), Mr. Wolfgang Münch (Germany) and Mr. Louis Dominique Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso).

As also indicated in document A/54/108, in accordance with article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, the President of the General Assembly shall consult with Member States to draw up a list of four countries that would be requested to propose candidates for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

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After holding the necessary consultations with the regional groups, I should like to communicate to the Assembly the following information received from the chairmen of regional groups. For one vacancy from the African States, the group of African States has endorsed Burkina Faso. For one vacancy from the Eastern European States, there are four candidates: Belarus, Croatia, Romania and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. For two vacancies from the Western European and other States, there are three candidates: Austria, Germany and the United States of America.

As the group of African States has endorsed one candidate for one vacancy — Burkina Faso — that country will therefore be included in the list of countries to be drawn up and the Government of Burkina Faso will be requested to propose a candidate for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

Since, from among the Eastern European States, there are four candidates for one vacancy, and from among the Western European and other States, there are three candidates for two vacancies, in order to complete the drawing up of the list I should like, in accordance with past practice, to consult with Member States through the procedure of holding an advisory vote by secret ballot to select one country from among the Eastern European States and two countries from among the Western European and other States. The three selected countries would each be requested to propose a candidate for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

Although this advisory vote would not be an election, we would follow the rules of procedure of the Assembly governing elections.

If there is no objection, may I take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: In accordance with existing practice, the countries receiving the greatest number of votes and not less than a majority of the votes of those present and voting shall be included in the list of countries to be drawn up. The countries drawn up would be requested to propose candidates for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

May I also take it that the General Assembly agrees to that procedure?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: In the case of a tie vote for a remaining seat, there will be a restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes.

I take it that the Assembly also agrees to that procedure.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I remind members that the Assembly is not — I repeat, not — appointing members to the Joint Inspection Unit at this time. It is only selecting three countries, each of which will be requested to propose a candidate. Therefore, only the name of a country, and not the name of an individual, should appear on the ballot paper. Let me repeat that only the name of a country, and not the name of an individual, should appear on the ballot paper.

I should now like to repeat the names of the four countries from among the Eastern European States that wish to propose a candidate: Belarus, Croatia, Romania and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. I should further like to point out that, from the Eastern European States, the Russian Federation already has a national serving on the Joint Inspection Unit. The name of that State therefore should not appear on the ballot paper.

I should next like to repeat the names of the three countries from among the Western European and other States that wish to propose a candidate: Austria, Germany and the United States of America. I should also like to point out that, from the Western European and other States, Italy already has a national serving on the Joint Inspection Unit. The name of that State therefore should not appear on the ballot paper.

The Assembly will now proceed to the selection of one country from among the Eastern European States and two countries from among the Western European and other States, each of which will be requested to propose candidates to fill the vacancies on the Joint Inspection Unit.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers marked "A" and "B" will now be distributed. May I request representatives to write on the ballot paper marked "A" for the Eastern European States the name of

the one State for which they wish to vote, and on the ballot paper marked "B" for the Western European and other States the names of the two States for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers marked "A" bearing the name of more than one State and ballot papers marked "B" bearing the names of more than two States will be declared invalid. The name of a Member State on a ballot paper that does not belong to the relevant region and the name of an individual on a ballot paper shall not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Regmi (Nepal), Ms. Mbega (the United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Conteras (Venezuela) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 3.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.25 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	175
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	174
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	173
Required majority:	87
Number of votes obtained:	
Romania	65
Belarus	60
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	28
Croatia	20

Group B — Western European and other States

Number of ballot papers:	175
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	175
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	173
Required majority:	87
Number of votes obtained:	
Germany	134
Austria	103
United States of America	101

Having obtained the required majority and having received the greatest number of votes, Germany and Austria will be included on the list of countries to be drawn up.

The Acting President: Since there remains one country to be selected from among the Eastern European States, we shall now proceed to the first restricted ballot. This second round of balloting shall be restricted to the two States from among the Eastern European States that were not selected but that obtained the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot, namely Belarus and Romania. This is in accordance with rule 94 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

We shall now begin the voting process. Ballot papers marked "A" will now be distributed. May I request representatives to write on the ballot paper marked "A", for the Eastern European States, the name of the one State for which they wish to vote. Ballot papers marked "A" bearing the names of more than one State will be declared invalid. Ballot papers bearing the name of a State that does not belong to the Eastern European region or bearing the name of an individual will not be counted at all.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Regmi (Nepal), Ms. Mbega (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Contreras (Venezuela) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.55 p.m.

The Acting President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A — Eastern European States

Number of ballot papers:	175
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	174
Abstentions:	4
Number of members voting:	170
Required majority:	86
Number of votes obtained:	
Romania	93
Belarus	77

Having obtained the required majority, Romania will be included on the list of countries to be drawn up.

The Acting President: I thank members for their advice and assistance, and I thank the tellers for their assistance.

In accordance with article 3, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, Austria, Burkina Faso, Germany and Romania will be requested to submit the names of the candidates and their curricula vitae highlighting their relevant qualifications for the tasks ahead.

After holding the appropriate consultations described in article 3, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, including consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council and with the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the President of the General Assembly will propose a list of qualified — I repeat, qualified — candidates to the Assembly for appointment to the Joint Inspection Unit.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 17.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.